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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MANAMA 000737

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, R

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/28/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV KPAO PHUM BA

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN'S YOUTH: WORRIED ABOUT JOBS, SKEPTICAL OF

POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND OPEN TO AMERICA Classified By: Ambassador Adam Ereli for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

- 1.(C) Summary: Opinion among Bahraini youth divides along sectarian lines on issues like employment, equality of opportunity and political refc
- 2.(C) Over the course of two months, Embassy public affairs officers pulsed young Bahrainis about attitudes toward work, politics and their fut
- 3.(C) Employment is a top concern for both Sunni and Shia youth, and especially men. A large majority tell us they worry about their job prospe
- 4.(C) Others -- particularly Shia -- believe there are job opportunities in the country but that they are not equally available to all. Accordi
- 5.(C) Although Sunni contacts acknowledged the widespread perception that not all Bahrainis are treated equally, they accused the Shia of exagg
- 6.(C) Several Sunni and Shia contacts cited the poor work ethic of Bahraini youth, rather than sectarian discrimination, as a factor in unemplc
- 7.(C) Mansoora Al-Jamri, a journalist from a prominent Shia family, said that young Bahrainis underestimate their potential and can only envisi
- 8.(SBU) A significant number of Bahraini high school and MANAMA 00000737 002 OF 003 university students believe that although there have been r
- 9.(C) Some Shia youth defended the government's economic policies. When asked about job discrimination against Shia, Marwa Badow, a Shia studer
- 10.(C) Several young Bahrainis told us that for them, the country's sectarian divides were not strictly delineated, but rather more subtle and
- 11.(C) Bahraini youth on both sides of the sectarian divide told us that the national elections scheduled for 2010 will be a litmus test for th
- 12.(SBU) While most Bahraini youth speak highly of Americans and their culture, they are also highly critical of U.S. foreign policy, particula
- 13.(C) Both Sunni and Shia contacts also agreed that a minority of young Bahrainis have a low opinion of the U.S. because they believe America
- 14.(SBU) Many contacts said young people in Bahrain are talking about Islamic cultural issues and influence, regional and global politics, and
- 15.(C) These were conversations with a relatively sophisticated group of young people - hardly a representative sample of Bahraini youth. Never
- 16.(C) Sectarianism remains persistent and entrenched. Young Bahrainis, like their parents, divide along sectarian lines on most issues, includ